

# THY KINGDOM COME

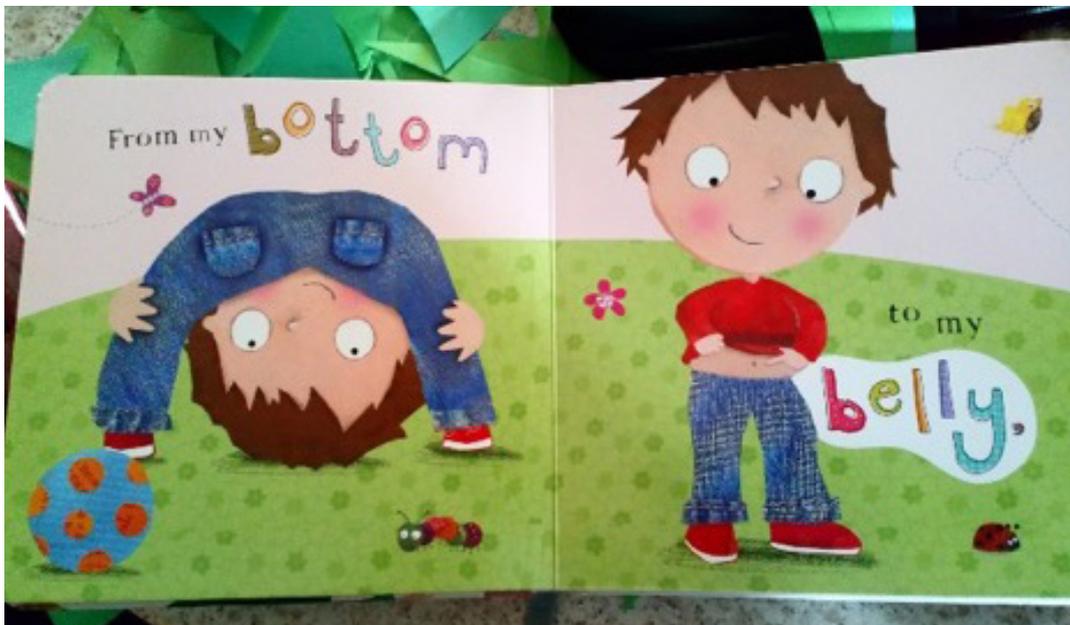
## God Knows All About Me!



### A simple idea for toddler groups... Knowing God

[http://www.eden.co.uk/shop/god-knows-all-about-me-revised-4294638.html?site\\_id=162595&adtype=pla&device=c&product\\_id=4294638&gclid=EA1a1QobChMIntKJ6\\_yV2QIVCLXtCh0A0Qq5EAQYASABEgJycvD\\_BwE](http://www.eden.co.uk/shop/god-knows-all-about-me-revised-4294638.html?site_id=162595&adtype=pla&device=c&product_id=4294638&gclid=EA1a1QobChMIntKJ6_yV2QIVCLXtCh0A0Qq5EAQYASABEgJycvD_BwE)

The words of Psalm 139 are encased in this amazing book which I use regularly in all our toddler groups, many of which are attended by Muslims, Hindus, people of no faith and many more. The illustrations are amazingly appealing, and we act out the story during circle time. The power of repetition is great, and this page is my favourite...



This term we did a simple craft in our session – what makes you happy and what makes you sad – based on this book. A simple face on a paper plate with a hinged mouth they can turn a smile into a sad mouth – it was a great conversation starter and got the children and parents/carers thinking about what makes them happy and sad.



The message of the book is that no matter what, who or where we are – 'God knows all about me'!



A suggested outline for a toddler group session based on the story of Zacchaeus – ideas from Daniel's Den and <https://www.facebook.com/lettheirlightshine/>

## Background

The story of Zacchaeus is a wonderful example of friendship and hospitality – 2 key elements to any toddler group. It involves a little man (lots of little ones at toddler groups) who wanted to be a friend of Jesus.

## Setting out the room

Every group has different ways to set out a room but here are some suggestions

Home corner

Set it up for a tea party ...with cups, pretend food, teddies/dolls, table chairs



## Sensory play

You can use a Tuff tray or table and cover it with lots of green leaves/twigs etc. Magnifying glasses, tweezers can be used to explore the various leaves.



## Playdough

You can print off and laminate the Zacchaeus playdough mats (find full sized versions at the end) and get people to make models of Zacchaeus trying to climb the tree. Or you can use the friendship playdough mats and encourage people to make models of their friends.



## Crafts – various suggestions you can choose from

### 1) Make a friendship tree

Each person who comes can decorate a leaf with their first name and add it to a tree (this could be a picture on the wall or a free-standing tree made from a small branch). This tree can be used in the re-telling of the story.



### 2) Make Zacchaeus climbing up a tree (can be used as a visual aid in the story)

Visual aid idea to help you tell the story (this could also be a craft – use glue to attach leaves rather than staples)



Make a tree from a Pringle container

The tree is a Pringles container covered in brown construction paper with large leaves stapled around the top. It's important that the brown construction paper is taller than the Pringles container by about 4cm, so you have space to staple on the leaves. Also leave the lid on so that Zacchaeus doesn't fall inside while you are telling the story! The leaves were made from construction paper and lightweight card in two contrasting greens.

You can slide Zacchaeus up the tree trunk by blue tac-ing him to a piece of brown construction paper that has been folded and wound round the tree trunk and stapled to make a circular collar for the tree. This should be tight enough to stay in place and slide smoothly. When Zacchaeus has climbed the tree take him off the brown slider/collar and blue tac him in the leaves.



### 3) Make friendship biscuits

Decorate a gingerbread person to eat at snack time and one to take home to give to a friend

### 4) Make an invitation to invite someone to your group for a cup of tea.

## Snacks

You could use gingerbread people biscuits or toast cut into the shapes of people – see above

## Story

Here is an example and words that can be used ...

Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1-10

*To tell the story – there are lots of actions that you can use during the story. Encourage the children and adults to join in with you. There is standing on tiptoe, looking, running and climbing.*



**The story**

One day Jesus was walking through the town. There were crowds and crowds of people who all wanted to see Jesus as he went through their town. There were dads and mums and grandmas and granddads and little children and big children who all wanted to see Jesus. They had heard so many things about him. He could do amazing things that only God could do. He said things that they wanted to hear. Most of all they wanted to see Jesus that day. They stood by the roadside and waited.

There was someone else who also wanted to see Jesus that day. His name was Zacchaeus. He hadn't gone with all the mums and dads and grandmas and granddads and big children and little children. They didn't like him. He wasn't a very nice man. No one wanted to be his friend. He didn't want to be their friend either!

But he wanted to see Jesus. So, he tried to get to where he could see but he had a really big problem. He was just too short. Zacchaeus was little and so many of the mums, dads and grandmas and granddads were bigger than him! He stood on tip toe but still he couldn't see past all the mums, dads, grandmas, granddads, big children and little children.

What could he do? He started to run! He ran past the mums, dads, grandmas, granddads, big children and little children and he got to a big tree. He knew this was just what he needed. He began to climb the tree. Up and up and up into the branches and the leaves, carefully, carefully up and up until he was so high he could see.

Now coming along the road was Jesus. Zacchaeus could see him. He was walking nearer and nearer the tree. And then Jesus stopped. Jesus looked up into the tree. He looked right at Zacchaeus.

'Hello Zacchaeus' Jesus said, 'come down the tree, I'd like to come to your house!' Jesus wanted to be friends with Zacchaeus. He wanted to go to his house and spend time with him.

Zacchaeus hurried down the tree – down and down and down, maybe not quite so carefully because he was in a hurry! Through the leaves and down to right where Jesus was. Jesus wanted to be Zacchaeus' friend. Jesus knew that Zacchaeus hadn't been very nice, but that day Zacchaeus became friends with Jesus and he was sorry for being so unkind.

The Bible tells us that Jesus came to look for and find the lost – people who, just like Zacchaeus, want to be friends with Jesus.

**Song**

Zacchaeus song – words can be printed out and children and adults love singing this

Zacchaeus was a very little man,  
And a very little man was he.  
He climbed up to a sycamore tree  
For the Saviour he wanted to see.  
And when Jesus passed that way  
He looked into the tree  
And said  
"Now Zacchaeus, you come down,  
For I'm coming to your house for tea."

*Follow up*

**Activities to do at church**

1) The friendship tree can be used as part of a prayer room/ activity. People in the church can pray for each person named on the leaves. The tree can be carried into a prayer room and this brings the work of the toddler group into the presence fo the congregation (toddler groups can be easily forgotten or not seem part of belonging to the church). There can be leaves on the tree that are blank and people can pray for new people to come along to the toddler group and to become a friend of Jesus.

2) Invite the elderly/members of your church etc to your toddler group for a cup of tea and cake and share the singing time. This gives the opportunity to build friendships and break down barriers.

**Activities to do at home**

Make cakes together and share with friends and neighbours.

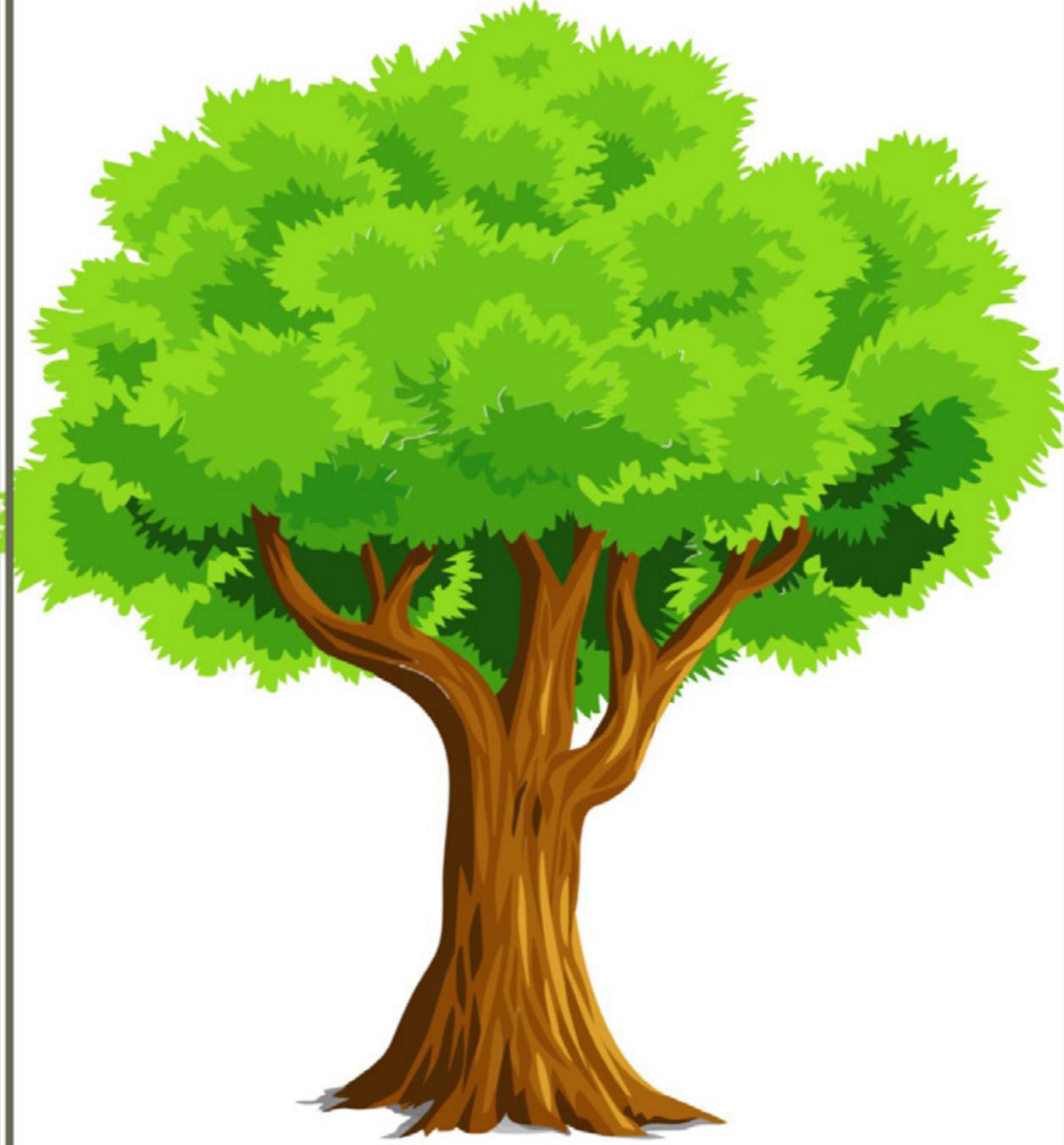


# Zacchaeus



**Make a model of Zacchaeus  
and help him climb up the tree**

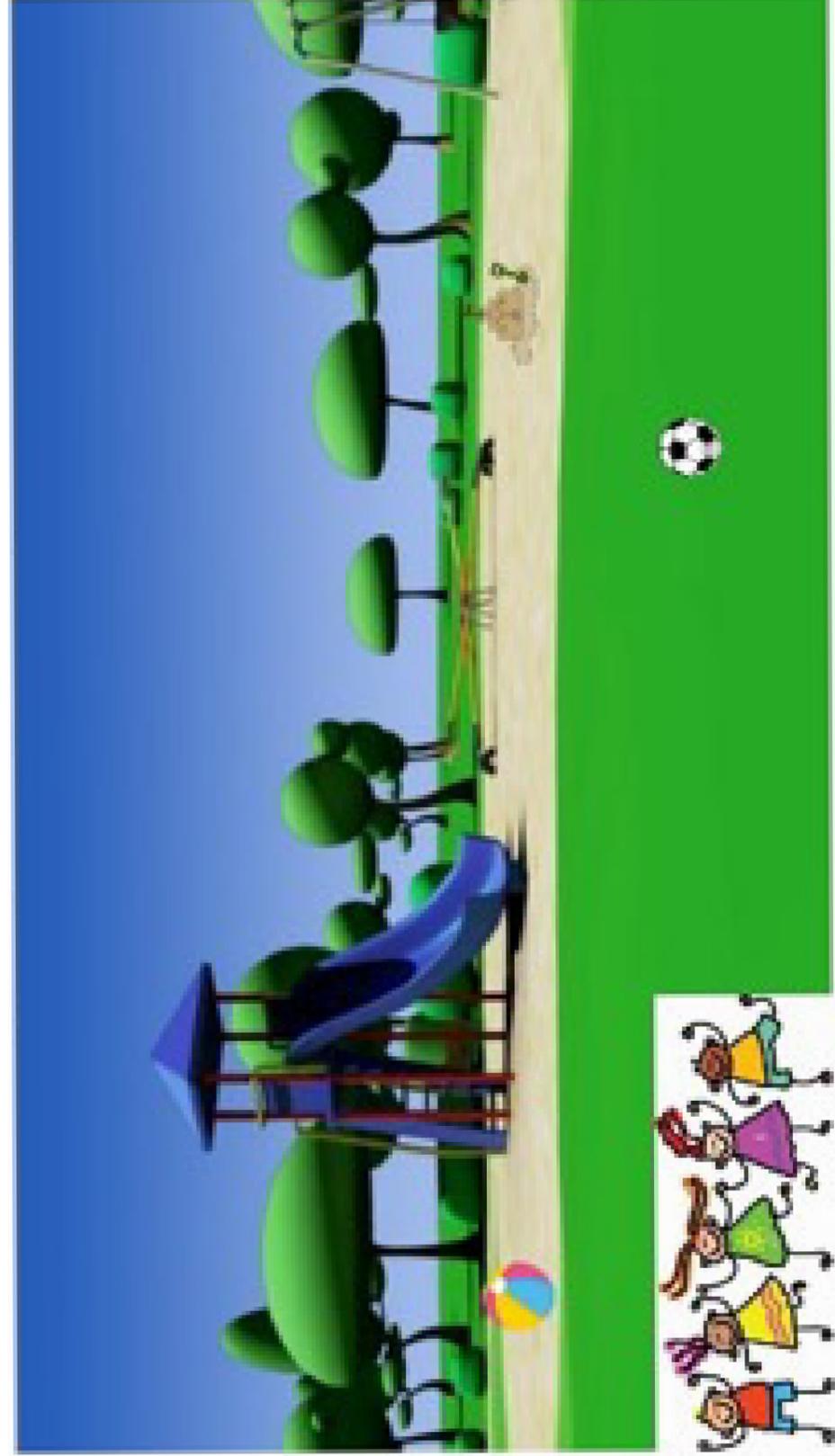
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## Who do you like to play with?

Make them out of playdough and say a thank you to God for your friends



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